

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the thorough examination of the present application that is reflected in the Official Action of March 19, 2004. Applicants also appreciate the Examiner's indication that Claims 20-23 are allowable, and that Claims 7-12 and 16-19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In order to place the present application in condition for allowance, these claims have been rewritten in independent form by incorporating the recitations of Claim 7 into Claim 1 and canceling Claim 7, by incorporating the recitations of Claim 1 into Claim 8, by incorporating the recitations of Claim 1 into Claim 10, and by incorporating the recitations of Claim 1 into Claim 16. Claim 24 has also been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 USC 102(b), by amending Claim 24 to recite that the substrate is a semiconductor substrate, similar to allowed Claim 7. Accordingly, Claims 24 and 25 are also in condition for allowance.

Finally, new dependent Claims 26-54 have been added. These claims correspond to original dependent Claims 2-6 and 13-15, and depend from independent Claims 8, 9, 10 and 16. Accordingly, these claims are, by definition, also in condition for allowance.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of all of pending Claims 1-6 and 8-54.

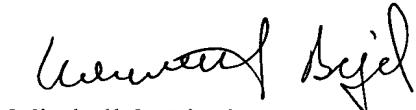
A new set of formal drawings also is being filed concurrently, with Figures 1A and 1B being labeled "Prior Art", to thereby overcome the objection to the drawings.

Finally, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to return a signed copy of the Form PTO-1449 that accompanied Applicants' Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement for International Search Report of February 24, 2004. For the convenience of the Examiner, a copy of this Supplemental IDS, the accompanying Form PTO-1449 and the stamped postcard indicating receipt are attached. Copies of Document 5 (for which Document 1 is an English-language counterpart), and Document 6 are also attached for the convenience of the Examiner.

In re: David B. Slater, Jr. et al.
Application Serial No.: 10/659,241
Filed: September 9, 2003
Page 10 of 10

In view of the above, Applicants respect allowance of the present application and passing the application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,



Mitchell S. Bigel
Registration No. 29,614
Attorney for Applicants

Customer Number 20792
Myers Bigel Sibley & Sajovec, P.A.
P.O. Box 37428
Raleigh, NC 27627
919-854-1400
919-854-1401 (Fax)

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on April 6, 2004.



Susan E. Freedman
Date of Signature: April 6, 2004